

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Interagency Council on Homelessness



Notes from the Meeting of the Interagency Council of Homelessness (ICH)

Date and Time: March 9, 2010 2:00pm to 3:30pm
Location: 801 East Shelter, 2700 Martin Luther King Ave., SE
Approximate Attendance: 97

Welcome and Introductions

Clarence Carter, DHS Director, called the meeting to order and then opened the meeting for comments from the public.

Public Comment Period

- A meeting attendee asked if there is a telephone number that can be provided to inform homeless persons when the buses will not be showing up for scheduled pickups; Director Carter informed the attendee that a DHS staff person would provide him with that number before the end of the meeting.
- An attendee voiced his concerns about the lack of care and patience that providers have for the homeless that are residing in the shelters.
- A meeting attendee voiced her concerns about shelter that is available after hypothermia season ends; she does not believe that there will be enough shelter once the hypothermia beds are no longer offered.
- A speaker from 801 East asked if the 801 East Shelter would be closing down; Director Carter informed the speaker that the facility will not be shutting down any time soon.
- A representative from the People for Fairness Coalition wanted to congratulate the ICH on the Strategic Plan.

ICH Committee Reports

Steering Committee-Scott McNeilly, Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless (WLCH)

- Scott McNeilly informed ICH members that the Strategic Plan will require some contracting changes and in order for those contracting changes to be made in time for them to be implemented by Oct. 1st the Strategic Plan must be voted on by mid April. A special ICH voting session will occur on April 13th at 130pm.
- To ensure that there is a rational method for managing, planning and monitoring the production of Permanent Supportive Housing Units there is a

recommendation that an ICH committee is formed; at the next meeting a proposal will be brought forth to the ICH.

Operations and Logistics Committee- Chapman Todd, Catholic Charities

- The Operations and logistics committee has focused on 2 things since the last meeting:
 - Obtaining Administrative Hearings reports from DHS
 - Review of requests for service at shelters that are received by DRES and TCP(Both of these tasks will be implemented in the coming weeks)

The committee has also begun to discuss the operation of the Winter Plan during the Hypothermia season and a debriefing will occur in April.

Presentation on the Strategic Action Plan to End Homelessness (Draft)

- Laura Zeilinger and Kelly Sweeney McShane presented on the draft of the Strategic Action Plan to End Homelessness, for a copy of the presentation please contact Darrell Cason (Darrell.Cason3@dc.gov).

Summary of the Discussion from the Pre-Meeting Focus Groups-Schroeder Stribling, Deputy Executive Director, N Street Village

- A focus group (round table) was held prior to the ICH meeting so that key issues could be discussed in detail by members of the homeless community with the findings or conclusions of the discussions presented at the subsequent ICH meeting. This input is sought in order to inform the planning process of the ICH and its committees. More than 30 individuals participated in this session.
- Participants were asked to reflect on specific questions or topics and to offer their input and perspectives through both small group conversations and in written comments. These questions were discussed:

Topic: Strategic Action Plan to End Homelessness Presentation

1. Please list what you like about the plan:
 - The plan focuses on getting persons out of homelessness
 - Performance based contracts for all providers
 - The plan does not contain one single point of entry
 - Additional 24 hour facilities
2. What concerns do you have regarding the plan?
 - Budget shortfalls
 - Shelter staff sensitivity training is needed

- The plan does not include links to Education and Job Training
 - Will there be additional Affordable Housing?
 - Special Needs Families are not addressed
 - Continuity of Services
 - Safety in the low barrier shelters is not addressed in the plan
- Each question was discussed in facilitated sub-groups, and summaries of the conversations, input, and ideas generated were provided by each group. Schroeder Stribling, Deputy Executive Director, N Street Village, gave a summary of the results of the discussions to the assembled ICH, and a written summary is also available.

Committee Discussion of the Strategic Plan Draft

- There was an interest in the focused outcomes portion of the plan and how and what will be measured; the speaker also recommended that a small group within the ICH focuses on obtaining the correct metrics that will accurately track outcomes. Director Carter informed the speaker that in addition to the small ICH that will focus on outcomes, DHS has an accountability officer that will assist with framing the correct metrics.
- A committee member asked if the budget will allow for the changes that are highlighted in the plan. The speaker also wanted to know the number of contracts that would be included in the implementation of the new plan. Laura Zeilinger informed the speaker that at the current time the exact number of contracts needed is unknown, and that DHS will have to unbundle a large contract that currently exists with The Community Partnership (TCP). With the implementation of the new plan, DHS will contract directly for outreach, the shelter hotline, PSH case management and the family and individual resource centers.
- There was a concern that the plan does not specifically label the expectations of each District agency.
- A few committee members addressed concerns around how outcomes of the plan will be measured and how to hold agencies accountable. They were informed that the Homelessness Services Reform Act requires a 5 year plan as well as annual action plans that measures accomplishments to date as well as any adjustments that need to be made in order to accomplish the long term goals of the plan.

Overview of 801 East

The 801 East Shelter provides 12-hour and 24-hour emergency shelter and comprehensive case management services to homeless single adult men 18 years or older.

Public Comment Period

- A public speaker suggested that the District turn many of the vacant buildings into housing units for homeless.

- Another speaker wanted to know if the action plan that was highlighted in the meeting had been utilized in other cities, Director Carter informed the speaker that elements of the plan have been implemented in different programs all across the country.
- A speaker expressed his appreciation for the action plan, but he is concerned that those who have no plan of exiting homelessness will pad the stats of the providers once the incentive based contracts are implemented.